

# MANAGING PAIN AFTER SURGERY

## Will I feel pain after my surgery?

The amount of pain you will have, and how long it will last, depends partly on what kind of surgery you are having. How you feel after surgery also depends on your age, health and other existing medical problems. There are things your doctors and nurses can do to help control your pain. They will work together to make sure you are as comfortable as possible after your surgery.

## How is pain treated after surgery?

After surgery, when your anesthesia wears off, you might need more pain medicines. Some are taken as pills. Some are given in other ways such as by injection (shot) or in a patch that goes on the skin. If you still have an IV or catheter, your doctor or nurse might continue to give pain medicines that way.

## How long will I have pain?

It depends. After a minor surgery, you might feel fine a few hours afterward. After major surgery, you might need pain medicine for days or even weeks. Your health care team will work with you to make sure your pain is treated properly. City of Hope's Division of Supportive Medicine has pain specialists that can help control your pain and other symptoms. Talk to your health care team.

## What will happen after I go home after surgery?

Your health care team will tell you what kind of pain to expect after your surgery. They may give you a prescription for pain medicines to take after you go home. It's important to take your pain medicines exactly the way the doctor or nurse tells you to. Taking too much of any medicine can be dangerous. In particular, opioids can cause serious problems if you take too much or mix them with other medicines. They can also lead to addiction in some people. Only take the amount your doctor or nurse tells you to, and stop taking the medicine as soon as your pain gets better.

